

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT General Services	(2) MEETING DATE 6/5/2012	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Janette Pell, General Services Agency Director (805) 781-5200	
(4) SUBJECT Request to approve a "Local Food Purchase Policy" for use by the County of San Luis Obispo.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION The General Services Agency and the Health Agency recommends that your Board approve the "Local Food Purchase Policy" for use within the County of San Luis Obispo and authorize the General Services Agency Director to conduct biannual updates to the policy.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. _____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		(12) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5th's Vote Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(13) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(14) W-9 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
(15) LOCATION MAP N/A	(16) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(17) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A Date _____	
(18) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Nikki J. Schmidt			
(19) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts -			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Janette Pell, General Services Agency Director

DATE: 6/5/2012

SUBJECT: Request to approve a "Local Food Purchase Policy" for use by the County of San Luis Obispo.

RECOMMENDATION

The General Services Agency and the Health Agency recommends that your Board approve the "Local Food Purchase Policy" for use within the County of San Luis Obispo and authorize the General Services Agency Director to conduct biannual updates to the policy.

DISCUSSION

In 2005, the Childhood Obesity Task Force was convened by the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation, and funded by the County Board of Supervisors, to develop a Community Action Plan to increase healthful eating and regular physical activity among San Luis Obispo County residents. A Health Education Specialist position was created in the Public Health Department to help coordinate countywide efforts. The Childhood Obesity Task Force evolved into Healthy Eating Active Living San Luis Obispo (HEAL-SLO). HEAL-SLO currently has over 40 local organizations as members, who work together to address the obesity epidemic.

HEAL-SLO has developed many programs since 2007. One of its popular programs is called ReThink Your Drink, which focuses on decreasing consumption of sugary beverages, a known contributor to weight gain. Over 175 presentations have been made to over 3,000 individuals at preschools, afterschool programs, school classrooms, parent groups and non-profit organizations, with the goal of increasing water as a beverage of choice. As a result of how well ReThink Your Drink has been received, Go, Slow, Whoa was developed. Go, Slow Whoa is a snacking curriculum which focuses on healthy choices for snacks between meals. To date, over 300 children have participated at 15 presentations. Other accomplishments include sponsoring walk and bike to school days, holding fruit and vegetable tastings at local elementary schools, helping develop school gardens, and developing the Be A Health Hero poster campaign, which included teacher and parent handouts based on California Department of Education curriculum standards.

HEAL-SLO is based on the socio-ecological model which recognizes the interwoven relationship that exists between the individual and their environment. While individuals are responsible for instituting and maintaining the lifestyle changes necessary to reduce risk and improve health, individual behavior is determined to a large extent by the social environment, e.g. community norms and values, regulations, and policies. HEAL-SLO has always acknowledged the necessity of developing policies which support healthy eating and active living. An example is the work done in the tobacco field. While tobacco cessation classes help many smokers quit smoking, the most important factors which have contributed to reduced smoking rates are policies which ban smoking (at worksites, at restaurants, at schools etc), and taxes on cigarettes. The Buy Local Policy that is being recommended is the first policy that HEAL-SLO is advocating.

There are many reasons why approving a Local Food Purchase Policy is important:

- Symbolic: Public institutions play a vital role in providing leadership and setting an example for a sustainable food supply.
- Buying local supports our local economy: In the industrial food system the Producer, i.e. local farmer or food supplier, only receives a small fraction of the consumer food dollar; however, when a dollar is spent at the local level, particularly within our County, the producer receives a much greater share as externalities related to storage and

distribution are eliminated or reduced. Supporting local producers will help sustain the viability of central coast agriculture, and help to preserve this important economic and cultural resource so that we can continue to rely on a dependable local food supply.

- Buying local ensures increased food security: The Central Coast is fortunate to have a year-round growing season and many different microclimates where a wide variety of food can be produced; however, our arable land is rapidly being lost to development. Seven thousand (7,000) acres of farmland were converted to urban sprawl in just two years, from 2000 to 2002.¹ Preserving our agricultural landscape and our ability to feed ourselves will come as a result of increased support of our local food Producers.
- Buying local helps fight the obesity epidemic: There has been a national focus on regional food systems (regional meaning local) as one means to combat the obesity epidemic. The idea is that when people buy fresh, local fruits and vegetables, they are tastier and healthier than fruits and vegetables that have to travel hundreds (or thousands) of miles to get to your plate. And if we increase our consumption of these fresh, local foods, we will decrease the amount of unhealthy products that we consume. The recent documentary, "Weight of the Nation" discusses the importance of regional food systems in the obesity epidemic. In the current industrial food system, fruits and vegetables travel an average of 1,500² miles from farm to fork and certain foods, such as apples, may remain in controlled atmosphere storage facilities for up to a year³ before they reach a grocery store. Industrial-scale produce is bred and selected for transportability, shelf-life and the ability to be ripened artificially, not for flavor or nutritional content. In our local food system where transportation and storage are minimized, producers can allow their fruits and vegetables to ripen naturally, resulting in increased flavor and nutrition, while providing us with a greater variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Buying local reduces our carbon footprint: The industrial food system, i.e. process and transportation, contributes to greenhouse gas emissions due to long distance transportation and large scale packaging, storage, and preparation of produce. In San Luis Obispo County, we can grow many crops year-round. We can choose to consume produce that is grown locally and in abundance. We can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels by choosing locally grown, naturally-ripened, minimally packaged produce. Promoting the purchase of local food is also an adaptation strategy listed in "Integrated Climate Change Adaptation Planning in San Luis Obispo County"

The County only has control over food which is purchased for the jail and juvenile services center. The total amount spent on food in FY 2010-11 was \$595,494 (\$94,550 on produce). The Local Food Purchase Policy would require that reasonable efforts be made to purchase local produce at prices that are fair to all parties concerned, before purchasing produce elsewhere.

Policy defines "local" by the following three tiers. The first preference would be to purchase Tier 1 produce. If that is not available, then Tier 2 produce would be acceptable. If Tier 2 produce is not available, then Tier 3 produce would be acceptable. If no local produce is available in any of the tiers, then purchasing produce outside the tiers would be allowed.

- Tier 1 –produce grown and processed within San Luis Obispo County
- Tier 2 –produce grown and processed within 5 neighboring counties Monterey, Kern, Kings, Ventura, and Santa Barbara
- Tier 3 – produce grown and processed within the State of California

The General Services Agency Director shall conduct biannual updates to the policy.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

HEAL-SLO, which is a coalition staffed by the Health Agency, actively supports the adoption of this policy. The General Services Agency (GSA) was consulted and supports the adoption of this policy. The Sheriff's Office was consulted and supports the adoption of this policy. The Agricultural Commissioner's office was consulted and supplied information about local farmers and the availability of local produce. The Farm Bureau and the Central Coast Agricultural Network (CCAN) were consulted and both support the Local Food Purchase Policy.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

¹ Pasciuto, Kimberly. 2010. "Central Coast Foodshed Guide, Information and Resources for the Development of a Foodshed Identity for the SLO County Region."

² Hendrickson, John. 1996. "Energy use in the U.S. food system: A summary of existing research and analysis."

³ North Carolina Ag Extension Service. "Post-Harvest Cooling and Handling of Apples" <http://www.bae.ncsu.edu>

The Local Food Purchase Policy will require that the County's Purchasing Department work closely with the Producer to ensure that local produce is purchased, at prices that are fair to all parties concerned, before purchasing elsewhere. It is not the intent of this policy to increase food purchase costs to the County. When reasonable and fair prices are determined for Tier 1 produce, the County will purchase produce that is grown and processed within the County of San Luis Obispo. The Purchasing Department will utilize cooperative buying opportunities as available. There should not be any significant impact to General Fund support required for food purchases.

RESULTS

Approval of the "Local Food Purchase Policy" for use by the County of San Luis Obispo will promote economic vitality and support local agricultural interests, and promote optimal public health and safety of its citizens by making fresh and nutritious produce readily available to County Departments that purchase food as part of their operations. This action contributes to a Healthy and Prosperous Community.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Local Food Purchase Policy